

C I R C U L A R

TO THE

PRESIDENTS OF CONFERENCES AND TRAVELING ELDERS.

DEAR BRETHREN—

It is considered best to lay before you in this manner the comments of Prest. Jos. F. Smith in regard to Conference Reports. The difficulty of giving this in the STAR will be of course apparent, and a General Conference of the Priesthood in the Mission would involve unjustifiable expense. This is issued in the best of feelings, and in the text of communication, that it may not be considered extra official on the part of those who are left in temporary charge, and also to show that although brother Jos. F. may be absent in body, he is yet vigilant in his Presidency, and most anxious for the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Mission. It is submitted with warm wishes for the best interests of all the brethren, by their fellow-laborers in the Gospel,

H. W. NAISBITT,
C. W. NIBLEY.

Salt Lake City, Feb. 19, 1878.

"Your welcome favor of Jan. 31st, came to hand last evening, with Quarterly Reports. I see ——— Conference pays about half Tithing and half Mission Fund. I believe they would do better to pay their Tithing, and let Mission Fund drop, except from such as have not faith to pay their Tithing, but will do a little for the Mission; still I should not have much faith in such persons.

"I also see that ——— has paid out for support of Elders, Hall rents, postage, etc., in the quarter, £s. 2d½, more than Tithing and Mission Fund both, and that just 5s. 2d½ less than I. E. Deposits has been sent to Liverpool. This would seem to show that I. E. D. money was used to pay current expenses, which, if so, although small, (and it may be intended to straighten it out next month or quarter,) is not exactly safe business, and should be avoided in the future. Again I say, I believe it would be better for the Saints to be taught to pay their Tithing, instead of dividing it into part Mission Fund, etc. I think ——— a less Conference than ———, yet ——— I see, has paid nearly as much again Tithing as the Tithing and Mission Fund both of ———. This does not seem to be as it should be. Yet I want no oppression. Wisdom and correct management ought to suffice.

"Again, I certainly think ——— Conference, with a Tithing income of £27 £s. 7d. per quarter, ought to be able to send a "habe" during that time to Liverpool; if not, it would seem almost advisable to discontinue the Conference house a while, and depend a little more on faith and works, and the promises of the Almighty. The Elders there seem to have fallen into the rut of balancing the Tithing receipts by expenses of one kind or another in the Conference every month. I see their Conference house and provisions for the quarter amount to about £10 1s., while the ——— Conference house costs but £5 2s. 9d., with two more Elders, the ——— Conference house £4 9s. 10d., with same number of Elders, and the ——— Conference house £8 17s. 2d½, with four more Elders. Why cannot ——— get along as cheaply in proportion as these other Conferences? Will you bring this to their notice? Allowing ——— to use as much Tithing for Conference house and board for four Elders, as ——— has for six, they could then have sent from £1 to £2 to Liverpool. If I am not correct in my conclusion, please correct me, and then give such counsel to them as you think would be right. ———, I think, ought to make a Tithing record in Liverpool, if only a tenth of their Tithing, or even but a "habe." ——— might do the same. Are not the expenses of ——— Conference house, and repairs of the same, pretty heavy?

"If I were a Conference President, I would tithe every penny I spent for my own necessities, but what I would have my Conference, at least, represented on the general Tithing Books. The Elders and Saints would feel better for it, if they would do this. Let the Saints pay their Tithing, and let it be used in wisdom and economy for the legitimate purpose of building up the kingdom of God, and for no other purpose whatever. No man has any right to appropriate a penny of the Tithing to himself except for an equivalent, and that only as agreed to or understood by the constituted and legitimate authorities of the Church. If men are not faithful stewards in their management of funds, they must be instructed, and if they do not heed, or refuse to obey good counsel, they must give place to others who will."

With love, I am, etc.,

JOSEPH F. SMITH.